

Catherine, Called Birdy

Catherine, also known as Little Bird or Birdy, is fourteen years old and growing up in the year 1290. The sole daughter of Lord Rollo and Lady Aislinn, Catherine is clever, witty, and determined not to marry any of the rich suitors her father has selected. In hopes of maturing her into a respectable young lady, Catherine's brother, Edward, insists she keep a daily diary of her affairs. Catherine soon begins to question the role women play within society. She does not care to sit, sew and gossip her days away, but yearns for adventure and escape, often resulting in disciplinary action from her father for her misconduct. While Catherine uses her cunning antics to evade most of her father's suitors, there remains one persistent prospect, Shaggy-Beard. Though the most unattractive and revolting of them all, Shaggy-Beard is also the wealthiest. As the potential suitor continues to negotiate the terms of the dowry with Lord Rollo, Shaggy Beard seems completely undaunted by Catherine's obvious objections and appalling behavior.

The Bronze Bow

The Bronze Bow takes place in Galilee, Israel, during the time of Jesus. Eighteen-year-old Daniel bar Jamin has endured a life of unbelievable hardships. At the tender age of eight, Daniel witnesses his father's and uncle's crucifixion by Roman soldiers. His mother also dies shortly thereafter. Daniel's younger sister, Leah, is so traumatized by their deaths that she appears to lose her mind. Daniel's grandmother, poor and elderly, is unable to support the children, so she is forced to sell Daniel to the town's blacksmith, Amalek. Daniel works for Amalek for five years but then escapes. He flees and it becomes his mission to kill as many Romans as he can in order to avenge his parents' deaths and to pay them back for the havoc they have wreaked on his country.

The Golden Goblet

Set in ancient Egypt in the city of Thebes, the protagonist in the book is Ranofer, a young Egyptian waif (*creature removed, by hardship, loss or other helpless circumstance, from his or her original surroundings*) who wants to be a goldsmith. He is mistreated by his half-brother Gebu, a stonecutter, who took responsibility for him after the death of his father. Ranofer likes working for Rekh the goldsmith because the people there love and respect each other. He is appalled to learn that his half brother is stealing from the goldsmith. Ranofer asks his friend Heqet to tell Rekh about the theft, but Gebu then takes him from the goldsmith and makes Ranofer his apprentice.

Crispin The Cross of Lead

Crispin: The Cross of Lead (2002) is an engaging story about a young boy (Crispin) in medieval England. The book starts with the death of the boy's mother, which sets a series of political complications in motion, dislodging Crispin from the village he has known his entire life and sending him out across the countryside. His path cuts across the various layers of society, exposing them from a peasant's view and showing readers just how frightening life in a world defined by plagues, illiteracy, and the feudal system could be. Not long after Crispin is forced to leave his village, he gains a new friend in Bear, a traveling juggler, political agitator, and spy. Through a series of adventures, Bear and Crispin become essentially foster father and son.

145th Street Short Stories

"145th Street Stories" is a collection of short tales tied together by the fact that all characters reside on the same street in Harlem. The first story, "Big Joe's Funeral" tells the humorous tale of a Harlem resident who decides to plan his own funeral, while very much alive. He encounters some dissent from his girlfriend's teenage daughter, but still goes forward with his plans. "Kitty & Mack: A Love Story" is a tale of young love and how life-changing events can alter but not necessarily prevent love from taking its course. "The Fighter" presents the struggle of a down-on-his-luck pugilist as he tries to fend for his family. "Angela's Eyes" is a poignant story of a young girl, believed to have psychic powers, due to the fact that her dreams appear to foretell impending death. "The Streak" is the tale of a young man who has a run of good luck after having had a bevy of misfortunes. An elderly resident of the neighborhood teaches a hesitant white policeman about life in "A Christmas Story". The last story, "145th Street Block Party" brings all the main characters together."